

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

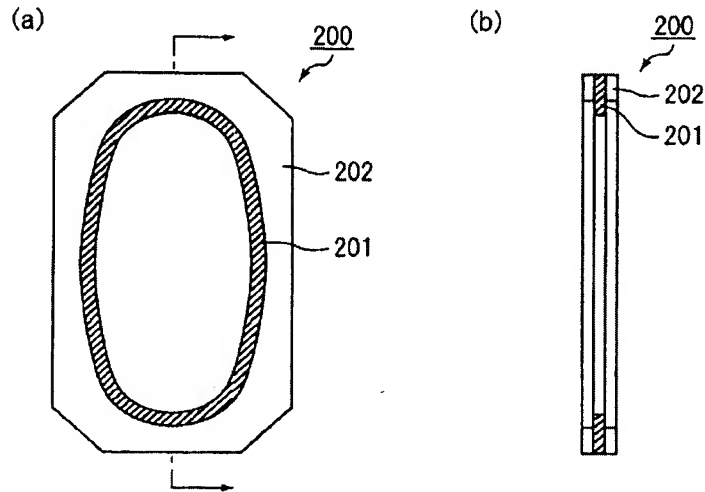
Claims 1, 2, 5, 8, and 9 are presently pending in this application. Claim 1 is herein amended. Support for the amendment is found at least in the specification at paragraphs [0073], [0074], [0119], [0120], [0127], and [0128]. No new matter is added. Claims 4, 6, and 7 are canceled without prejudice.

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 1, 2, and 5-9 were rejected as indefinite under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claims 1, 2, and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Sander (U.S. Publication 2002/0100994), in view of Horikawa (EP 449556) and Applicant's allegedly admitted prior art. Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over McNeill (U.S. Patent No. 5,385,873). Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Sander, in view of Horikawa, further in view of Applicant's allegedly admitted prior art, and further in view of McNeill.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. 35 U.S.C. §112 requires that a patent "specification shall contain a written description of the invention." Satisfaction of the written description requirement does not require the description of claim terms to have *ipsis verbis* antecedent support in the originally filed application. *In re Lukach*, 442 F.2d 967, 969, 169 USPQ 795, 796 (CCPA 1971). An application need not describe more than the invention warrants; it is only necessary that the description be sufficiently clear that one of ordinary skill would recognize that the applicant made the invention having those limitations. *In re Wertheim*, 541 F.2d 257, 262, 191 USPQ

90, 96 (CCPA 1976). One of skill in the art would recognize that the Applicant had possession of the claimed invention, in which the scraper is both plate-shaped and ring-shaped.

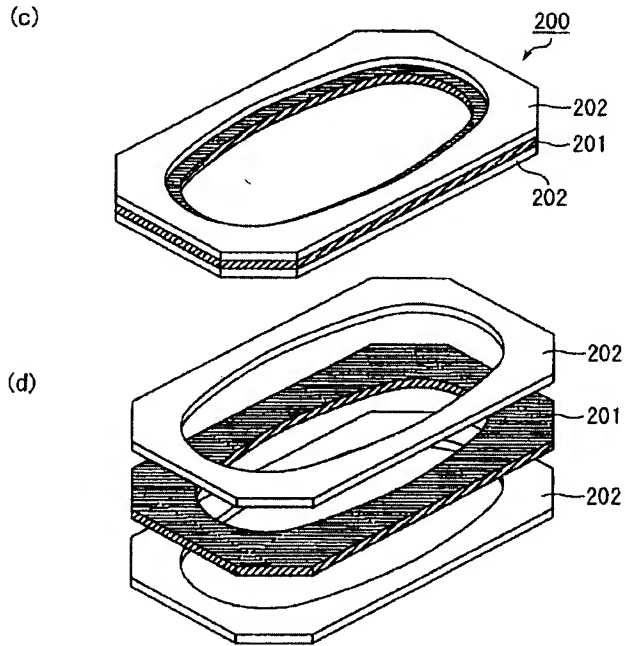
Figs. a and b are the same as Figs. 4(a) and 4(b) in the specification, and are shown below:



As described in the present specification, these figures show an embodiment of a scraper (200) used in the manufacturing method of the present invention. Paragraph [0082]-[0087].

Fig. a (corresponding to Fig. 4(a) in the specification) shows a plan view of the embodiment.

Fig. b (corresponding to Fig. 4(b) in the specification) shows a cross-sectional view of the same embodiment. Figs. c and d, shown below, show a perspective diagram and an exploded perspective of the embodiment of the scraper shown in Figs. a and b:



While Figs. c and d are not explicitly in the specification, one skilled in the art would understand that the embodiment of the scraper detailed with the plan and cross-sectional views in Figs. 4(a) and 4(b) would have the additional perspectives shown in Figs. c and d. Moreover, a skilled artisan would recognize that the figures show scraper (200) with a structure in which a ring-shaped center member (201) is cramped by ring-shaped cramping members (202) having an inner diameter greater than the ring-shaped center member (201). Such an artisan would see that the scraper, viewed as a whole as in Figs. b, c, and d, is plate-shaped, and has a ring-shaped member. Thus, the instant application clearly discloses a scraper that is both ring-shaped and plate-shaped. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection of claims 1 and 2.

Claims 1, 2, and 5-9 were rejected as indefinite under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. As discussed above, the instant application clearly discloses a structure which is both plate-shaped and ring-shaped. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection of claims 1, 2, 5, 8, and 9.

Claims 1, 2, and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Sander (U.S. Publication 2002/0100994), in view of Horikawa (EP 449556) and Applicant's admitted prior art. Applicant herein amends claim 1, from which claims 2 and 6-8 depend. As amended, claim 1 is directed to a method of manufacturing a honeycomb structural body having a sealing material layer formed on a peripheral portion of a pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member. The method includes preparing a pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member, and applying a paste-like sealing material onto the circumferential face of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member. The sealing material is a raw material of said sealing material layer. The method further includes fitting a plate-shaped and ring-shaped scraper to the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member. The scraper is configured to be brought into contact with the circumferential face of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member so as to slide thereon. The method further includes first moving the ring-shaped scraper in a first length direction of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member, thereby expanding the paste-like sealing material applied on to the circumferential face of said pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member so as to spread over the entire circumferential face of said pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member. The scraper is moved while the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb is secured. The method further includes second moving the ring-shaped scraper in a second length direction of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member, starting from the end face of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member on the side opposite to the starting side of a first moving of such scraper. This allows for the sealing material layer to be formed on the entire circumferential face of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member.

Sander doesn't teach a method that includes a scraping step of using a plate-shaped and ring-shaped scraper. Sander discloses an apparatus that forms a sealing material layer using a calibrating ring configured to surround the circumferential face of a honeycomb structured body, depending on its circumferential shape. The calibrating ring is fixed and

integrated with the extrusion chamber, which has a columnar shape. The face of the calibrating ring contacts and slides along the circumferential face of the honeycomb structured body. This results in a great deal of slide resistance. The scraper in Sander is ring-shaped, not plate-shaped. Moreover, given this shape, even if the person skilled in the art did attempt to start the second moving of said scraper from the end face of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member on the side opposite to the starting side of the first scraping step with the Sander device, it would likely be difficult or impossible.

Moreover, Sander doesn't teach a method in which the sealing material is spread over the entire circumferential face of the porous honeycomb member. In Sander, end caps are placed over each functional end of the catalyst structures. The end caps cover the functional end faces of each catalyst structure to prevent the application of seal material to these surfaces as the structures pass through the extrusion chamber, as discussed in paragraph [0016] of Sander. Accordingly, it is essential for the method for applying seal material of Sander to employ the end caps. As shown in Fig. 1 of Sander, the peripheral portion of the porous honeycomb member in the vicinity of each end face, covered with the end caps (14a), is not applied with the seal material in the state that the end caps are placed over the end faces of the porous honeycomb member. Accordingly, it is not possible to spread the seal material over the entire circumferential face of the porous honeycomb member, as required by claim 1.

Sander doesn't teach a method using a plate-shaped and ring-shaped scraper, and doesn't teach the claimed scrape movement process. Neither Horikawa nor any allegedly admitted prior art remedy the inadequacies of Sander, as Horikawa and the alleged prior art don't disclose or suggest anything about a plate-shaped and ring-shaped scraper and the scrape movement process as claimed. Every word in a claim must be considered in determining the question of patentability against the prior art. *In re Wilson*, 424 F.2d 1382, 1385 (CCPA

1970). A claimed invention can only be found obvious if there is "some articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness." *KSR Int'l v. Teleflex Inc.*, 127 S. Ct. 1727, 1741 (2007). Lacking disclosure of all of the elements, and providing no reasoning why one would be led to provide for the undisclosed elements, the combination of Sander, Horikawa, and the allegedly admitted prior art cannot render claim 1, or any claim depending therefrom, obvious. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of these rejections.

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Sander, in view of Horikawa, further in view of Applicant's allegedly admitted prior art, and further in view of McNeill. McNeill cannot remedy the inadequacies of the other references, discussed above, as it also fails to teach anything regarding plate-shaped and ring-shaped scraper and the scrape movement as claimed. Lacking disclosure of all of the elements, and providing no reasoning why one would be led to provide for the undisclosed elements, the combination of Sander, Horikawa, McNeill and the allegedly admitted prior art cannot render claim 9 obvious. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim 4 was rejected as being unpatentable over McNeill. Claim 4 is canceled, rendering this rejection moot. Likewise, the rejections to claims 6 and 7 are rendered moot by their cancellation.

In view of the amendments and discussions presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

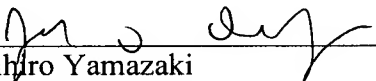
Respectfully submitted,

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